

Recruitment Toolbox

Hiring Young Adult Talent:

Apprenticeships are a win-win for employers and the next generation of leaders. Through a work-based training program that pairs classroom and on-the-job training, young adults learn the skills employers need and companies attract committed talent prepared to succeed. Yet, young adults know little about apprenticeships, complicating employers’ recruitment efforts.

Young Invincibles (YI) is a national non-profit organization committed to expanding economic opportunity for young adults ages 18 - 34. In 2016, YI explored young adults’ understanding of apprenticeships and their needs in earn-and-learn opportunities. We found young adults from Chicago held three key misunderstandings: believing apprenticeships are unpaid opportunities like internships, do not currently exist in their community, and meant they could not earn a college degree. Unless programs address these misconceptions head on, putting compelling information directly into the hands of young adults, recruitment efforts may come up short.

54 % OF AMERICAN JOBS ARE MIDDLE-SKILL BUT ONLY 44 % OF THE COUNTRY'S WORKERS ARE TRAINED TO A MIDDLE-SKILL LEVEL.

NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION (2014). UNITED STATES' FORGOTTEN MIDDLE. RETRIEVED FROM [HTTP://WWW.NSC.ORG](http://www.nsc.org)



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Recruitment Overview:

A few basic practices around **engaging the right partners** and **attracting talent through compelling messaging and activities** can result in a diverse candidate pool of youth committed to learning the skills your workplace demands.

Partners:

Community-based organizations and education providers already work closely with the young adults your program is looking for. Overtime, these groups may not only distribute information on your program, but also actively identify and recruit applicants that are good fits for your site.

Potential Partners:

- High Schools
 - How to find: <https://www.greatschools.org/school-district-boundaries-map/>
 - Key Contacts: Principal, Career Services Department, Counseling Department
- Community Colleges
 - How to find: <http://iccbdsrv.iccb.org/zipcodes/home.cfm>
 - Key Contacts: Career Services Department, Counseling Department
- Local Workforce Area Partnership
 - What: The partnerships coordinate workforce development activities, including working with youth and young adults disconnected from school and work (also known as opportunity youth).
 - How to find: <http://www.illinoisworkforce.net/lwias.html>
 - Key Contacts: Director of the Workforce Development Department
- Social Service Providers
 - What: Providers support a wide range of young adults, from those looking for work, training, housing, or other public benefits.
 - How to find: There is not a central listing of providers. Consider looking for a local: Catholic Charities, United Way, YMCA, YWCA, Urban Alliance, NAMI, or BUILD.



Tips:

- Find the Right Person: Through the website and speaking to frontline staff (e.g., operators or receptionists), determine who you should contact with your request. This is more effective than broadly blasting information to generic emails.
- Call: It is best to directly call once you've identified the right person to work with. Email is easy to ignore, especially if someone has follow up questions.
- Provide Critical Information: Make sure to provide programs all the critical information at the outset. This includes program requirements and expectations (citizenship status, restrictions on those with a record, transportation requirements, etc.), the application process, and process for your program receiving referrals (who should programs contact with candidates and what information do you want).
- Develop a Relationship: Organizations are more likely to partner with you if you have an understanding of one another and ways to collaborate. Best practices include taking time to get to know their priorities, the populations they serve, and determining what collaboration is mutually beneficial for both parties.

Compelling Messaging & Strategies:

When engaging these partners, use messaging and strategies that interest young adults. According to [Young Invincibles' research](#), while 65 percent of young adults had heard the term “apprenticeships”, they knew little about the model. Young adults typically think of apprenticeships as an outdated activity from the past, an unpaid internship, or a program not available in their community. This complicates recruitment. Programs must distribute engaging materials and hold activities like information sessions and tours that counteract these misunderstandings.

Messaging:

While young adults are not drawn in by the word apprenticeships, through engagement with over 250 young adults, Young Invincibles found they do care about: pay, real-life experience, opportunities to get outside the classroom, doing work that results in school credit, and working towards a career. The word bubble reflects language young adults used when describing apprenticeships. If your program pays, we strongly



recommend you to mention this. Pay is a top factor for young people when evaluating workforce development opportunities. Additionally, young adults appreciate lighthearted messaging and dislike condescending tones. Sample materials are available at the end of the toolkit.

Images:

As we all know, a picture is worth a thousand words. Make sure images include diverse young adults, including women and people color. This is critical if your sector is stereotyped as a field for a narrow cross-section of the population, say Caucasian males. If your field struggles to attract diverse candidates, you can also create videos and testimony from non-traditional employees.

Activities:

Programs should distribute materials through the channels young adults already rely on for finding job opportunities: [their networks, social media, and online research](#). The toolkit has already described key partners for tapping into young adults' networks and a later section details ways to use social media.

Beyond these strategies, first-hand exposure to the apprenticeship model, your program, and your program's field will capture young adults' attention. YI found



young adult are strongly interested in learning about careers by speaking to people working in their fields of interest. Activities could include:

- Providing worksite tours,
- Creating profiles of apprentices with a picture and first-hand testimony,
- Sharing video of apprentices on the job and describing their work, and
- Having near-peers, such as alums from a high school, speak to youth about the position and its benefits.

Social Media:

The hype is true – young adults regularly use social media and this includes using the medium to find jobs. According to [Pew Research Center](#), 43 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds used social media to look for a job and 40 percent used social media to notify peers about a job. Activities could include:

- Using targeted Facebook ads and promoted tweets that reach young adults living near your program, a relatively affordable strategy, and
- Creating sharable content, including video, images, or posts, that young adults are excited to share with their peers.

Social Media Tips and Tricks:

1. **Join the party:** If you don't have one already, take some time to create a Facebook and Twitter account for your business/company. These tools give you a way to market to millions of people, and communicate directly with the people you envision recruiting.
2. **Be responsive:** Post regularly and reply quickly to messages. When it comes to recruiting, people really appreciate timely responses to their inquiries, and are more likely to be interested in your program.
3. **Use hashtags:** Hashtags are used to identify content on a specific topic or subject. Using strategic hashtags will direct people to your page and recruitment materials! You can find a few examples in the Sample Materials section of this toolkit.
4. **Time your posts well:** Generally, the best time to post to Facebook is between 1 and 4pm. For Twitter, peak usage is during lunch (noon-1pm) and after work (5pm-6pm). Post during these times to maximize your recruitment efforts.
5. **Avoid industry-specific jargon:** The last thing you want to do is turn off a potential recruit by using language they aren't familiar with. Keep it simple and general, focusing on the benefits of the program.



6. **Use diverse images:** Young adults notice who is represented in the images. Make sure to have men and women from a variety of race and ethnicities represented in your pictures.

Social Media Sample Content - Facebook

- Invincible Technologies is looking for motivated individuals to join our team as IT Apprentices. Get paid on-the-job training, college credit, and universal IT certifications, all while working side by side with some of the nation's most brilliant IT professionals. Apply today! #apprenticeshipswork [link to job posting]
- Know anyone interested in the Information Technology industry? Let them know that Invincible Technologies is looking for an apprentice! We are growing fast and need excited and motivated people to join our team. Click here to learn more: [link to job posting]

Social Media Sample Content - Twitter

- Are you an IT enthusiast? Join our IT Apprentice Program now! #apprenticeshipswork [link to job posting]
- Want to work, learn, and start a career in IT all at once? Check out our apprentice program! #apprenticeshipswork [link to job posting]
- Invincible Technologies is looking for an IT Apprentice, and we want you! #apprenticeshipswork [link to job posting]
- Work with the world's leading technology innovators as an apprentice! #apprenticeshipswork [link to job posting]

Social Media Sample Images





PARTICIPATING IN THE APPRENTICESHIPS PROGRAM EXPOSED ME TO A TYPE OF CAREER PATH I NEVER KNEW WAS OUT THERE. [...] EVENTUALLY I WOULD WANT TO SEE MORE APPRENTICESHIPS OPPORTUNITIES, BUT UNTIL THEN, I THINK MORE SCHOOLS SHOULD MAKE THEIR STUDENTS AWARE THAT THESE PROGRAMS EXIST.

- MIRLETTE, CHICAGO

More sharable images are available on the Illinois WorkNet partner page.

Conventional Recruitment:

For connecting with partners and attracting candidates, you will find below a sample job posting, outreach email, and flyer.

Sample Job Posting:

Title: IT Apprenticeship

Location: Chicago

Who we are:

Invincible Technologies is a worldwide technical innovation firm. We opened our first office in Washington, D.C., and now have locations in Chicago, New York, Colorado, Texas, and California. Founded in 2008, Invincible Technologies has been an industry leader and profitable every year of its existence.

IT Operations Apprenticeship:

The Invincible Technology IT Apprenticeship is a program designed to transform high-aptitude candidates into high-caliber technologists ready to join the Information Technology Support Team. Our team deploys, monitors, and configures a complex suite of IT applications. They also provide exceptional technical support to a highly diverse clientele in a competitive technology environment.

The work on this team is fast paced and challenging, and if you possess the potential and drive, we are confident that we can train you to become a successful technologist. The Apprenticeship is open to all candidates, even those without any prior experience in technology.

What you'll do:

- Receive paid professional training and Cisco Certified Network Professional certification
- Receive guided in house training in scripting and technological support
- Support cutting-edge technology innovation systems in a high-availability, performance-critical environment
- Work amongst talented colleagues that demonstrate great respect and camaraderie and enjoy solving technical problems as a team
- Start an exciting career path in IT with potential for growth and advancement

**What you'll need:**

- Be at least 18 years old
- A high aptitude for understanding technical concepts
- A strong work ethic with a mindset focused on operational excellence
- Strong analytical, quantitative and problem solving abilities
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Customer service orientation
- Reliable transportation
- NO prior experience in a relevant technical field
- NO prior experience in financial markets or systems

Sample Recruitment Email:

What if I told you that you could work, take college courses, and start a career all at once?

That is exactly what an Information Technology Apprenticeship at Invincible Technologies is all about. As an I.T. Apprentice, you will take college level I.T. courses at Young Invincible University and work for a living wage in our I.T. department. You will also be paired with a mentor that will help guide you and provide support as you progress through the program, culminating in a strong professional network and an industry-recognized credential that allows you to work across the region.

Want to learn more? Click here [\[insert link\]](#) to see a full program description and list of qualifications.

Don't forget to like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to get the most up to date information on program dates, deadlines, and more!

Thanks,

The Invincible Technology Team

Sample Flyer:

Please note that you should replace the image with one from your company. The original file is available at the Illinois WorkNet partner page, along with other images.



REAL LIFE WORK EXPERIENCE

Wondering how to launch your career?

Join Hospital X's phlebotomist youth apprenticeship program!

- Get paid to learn the skills healthcare employers demand, outside the classroom
- Explore healthcare careers
- And, earn college credit and secure industry-recognized credentials
- Requirements: Age 18 and have access to a car

FIND OUT MORE

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[LOGOS HERE]

Conclusion:

By engaging the right partners and using compelling messages, images, and activities, your program can play off the strategies young adults already use to discover job opportunities. Recognizing that young adults may not know apprenticeships or your industry, make sure to emphasize your program's benefits and share information through social media and existing organizations in order to build awareness and interest in your programming.